

FOR MORE INFORMATION

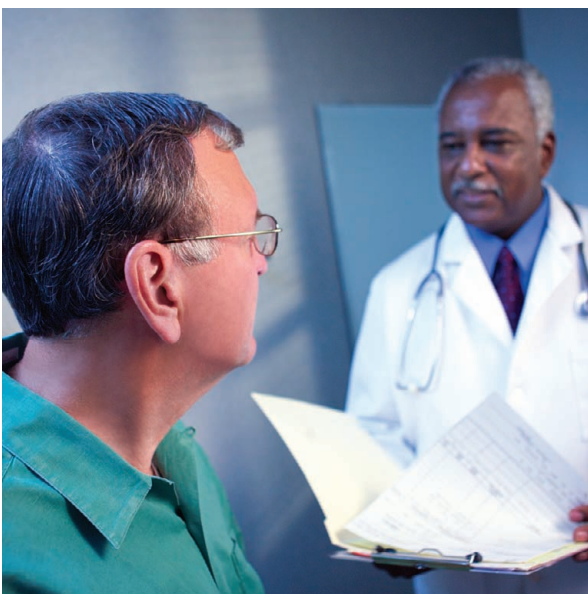
The Department of Health and Human Services has developed a website, Smokefree.gov www.smokefree.gov/hp.html, that provides information, resources, and tools to support health professionals in delivering smoking cessation counseling services based on the Public Health Service clinical practice guideline on treating tobacco use and dependence.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has developed a variety of educational resources as part of a broad outreach campaign to promote awareness and increase utilization of all Medicare preventive benefits.

You can learn more about coverage, billing, coding, and reimbursement of Medicare's preventive services and screenings at www.cms.hhs.gov/mlngeninfo/, on the CMS website, or you may obtain a copy of *The Guide to Medicare Preventive Services for Physicians, Providers, Suppliers, and Other Health Care Professionals* from the Medicare Learning Network.

MEDICARE LEARNING NETWORK (MLN)

The Medicare Learning Network (MLN) is the brand name for official CMS educational products and information for Medicare fee-for-service providers. For additional information visit the Medicare Learning Network's web page at www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNGenInfo on the CMS website.



FOR BENEFICIARY-RELATED INFORMATION

Smokefree.gov www.smokefree.gov provides accurate, up-to-date information and professional assistance to help support the immediate and long-term needs of people trying to quit smoking.

The official U.S. Government website for people with Medicare is located on the web at www.medicare.gov, or more information can be obtained by calling 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.

Medicare
Preventive
Services



For Physicians, Providers, Suppliers, and Other Health Care Professionals

Smoking and Tobacco-Use Cessation Counseling Services



This brochure was prepared as a service to the public and is not intended to grant rights or impose obligations. This brochure may contain references or links to statutes, regulations, or other policy materials. The information provided is only intended to be a general summary. It is not intended to take the place of either the written law or regulations. We encourage readers to review the specific statutes, regulations and other interpretive materials for a full and accurate statement of their contents.



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This brochure provides a basic overview of Medicare's smoking and tobacco-use cessation counseling benefit. This benefit is part of a comprehensive set of preventive services and screenings covered by Medicare.



OVERVIEW

Cigarette smoking is the single most preventable cause of disease and death in the United States. Although smoking rates have significantly declined, 9.3 percent of the population age 65 and older smokes cigarettes. Approximately 440,000 people die annually from smoking related diseases, with the majority of deaths—68 percent (300,000)—being among people ages 65 and older.

Smoking contributes to and can exacerbate heart disease, cancer, stroke, lung disease, diabetes, hypertension, osteoporosis, macular degeneration, and cataracts. Smoking can interfere with the effectiveness of medications, including insulin, propranolol, theophylline, and antidepressants.

Smoking cessation is beneficial at any age. Seniors who quit experience rapid improvements in breathing and circulation. They decrease their risk for heart disease and stroke within 1 year of quitting. In fact, their risk for heart disease decreases to that of a non-smoker's within 1 to 5 years after quitting. Smoking cessation can improve functional status and quality of life.

Interest in smoking cessation is increasing. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimated in 2002 that 57 percent of smokers age 65 and over reported a desire to quit. Currently, about 10 percent of elderly smokers quit each year, with 1 percent relapsing.

Older smokers have been shown to be more successful in their quit attempts than younger smokers and respond favorably to their providers' advice to quit smoking.

COVERAGE INFORMATION

Medicare provides coverage of smoking and tobacco-use counseling for beneficiaries who:

- use tobacco and have a disease or an adverse health effect that has been found by the U.S. Surgeon General to be linked to tobacco use; or
- are taking a therapeutic agent whose metabolism or dosing is affected by tobacco use as based on Food and Drug Administration-approved information.

Medicare will cover 2 cessation attempts per year. Each attempt may include a maximum of 4 counseling sessions. The total annual benefit covers up to 8 counseling sessions in a 12-month period. The beneficiary may receive another 8 counseling sessions during a second or subsequent year after 11 full months have passed since the first Medicare covered cessation counseling session was performed. For example, if the first of 8 covered sessions was performed in April 2005, a second series of 8 sessions may begin in April 2006.

Counseling may be provided to outpatient and inpatient beneficiaries as long as coverage requirements are met. Beneficiaries must be alert at the time services are provided.

Eligible beneficiaries are covered under Medicare Part B when certain conditions of coverage are met, subject to certain frequency and other limitations. The coinsurance or copayment applies after the yearly Medicare Part B deductible has been met.

NOTE: Medicare's prescription drug benefit also covers smoking and tobacco-use cessation agents prescribed by a physician.



CESSATION COUNSELING ATTEMPT DEFINED

A cessation counseling attempt occurs when a qualified physician or other Medicare-recognized practitioner determines that a beneficiary meets the eligibility requirements and initiates treatment with a cessation counseling attempt. A cessation counseling attempt includes:

- up to 4 cessation counseling sessions (1 attempt = up to 4 sessions)

Two cessation counseling attempts (or up to 8 cessation counseling sessions) are allowed every 12 months.



CESSATION COUNSELING SESSION DEFINED

Cessation counseling session refers to face-to-face patient contact of either:

- intermediate (greater than 3 minutes up to 10 minutes); or
- intensive (greater than 10 minutes).

Cessation counseling sessions may be performed "incident to" the services of a qualified practitioner. During a 12-month period, the practitioner and the beneficiary have flexibility to choose between intermediate or intensive counseling strategies for each session.

NOTE: Medicare covers minimal counseling at each evaluation and management visit.

DOCUMENTATION

Keep patient record information on file for each Medicare patient for whom a smoking and tobacco-use cessation counseling claim is made. Medical record documentation must adequately demonstrate that Medicare coverage conditions were met.

Diagnosis codes should reflect:

- the condition the patient has that is adversely affected by tobacco use; or
- the condition the patient is being treated for with a therapeutic agent whose metabolism is affected by tobacco use.